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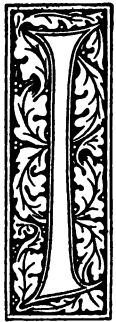
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William Morris

ground, the stream, are almost as full of other lives and wills as the town; yes, and of strifes; but almost none are of a sort to startle, reproach or aggrieve us. Nothing is trivial, extraneous or impertinent in the woods, since there we have no schemes of economy, discipline or beauty. We let the squirrels do both the bragging and the scolding; we seek the leafy ambush not to string more tightly, but rather to unbend for a brief space, our bow of offensive and defensive purposes; to bathe and bind our wounded powers; above all to let human fellowship drowse a spell, that it may rise refreshed for new activity.

And not from our will and schemes alone, do the woods give us sweet liberty, but also from our wants; from countless appliances and real or fancied necessities of the downtown competitive, uptown social, and, worst of all, the competitive-social, life; from the cumbersome armor and artillery with which we seek to defy the fluctuations of day and night, hot and cold, rain and drought, all those things of which roof, chimney and smoothed highway are signs; in a word, from all that vast artificial order, with its myriad complexities, so many of them, no doubt, superfluous, which yet makes living and loving practicable to seven thousand times as many of us as if we should try to live only in the woods.

WILLIAM MORRIS, ARTIST, POET, CRAFTSMAN.

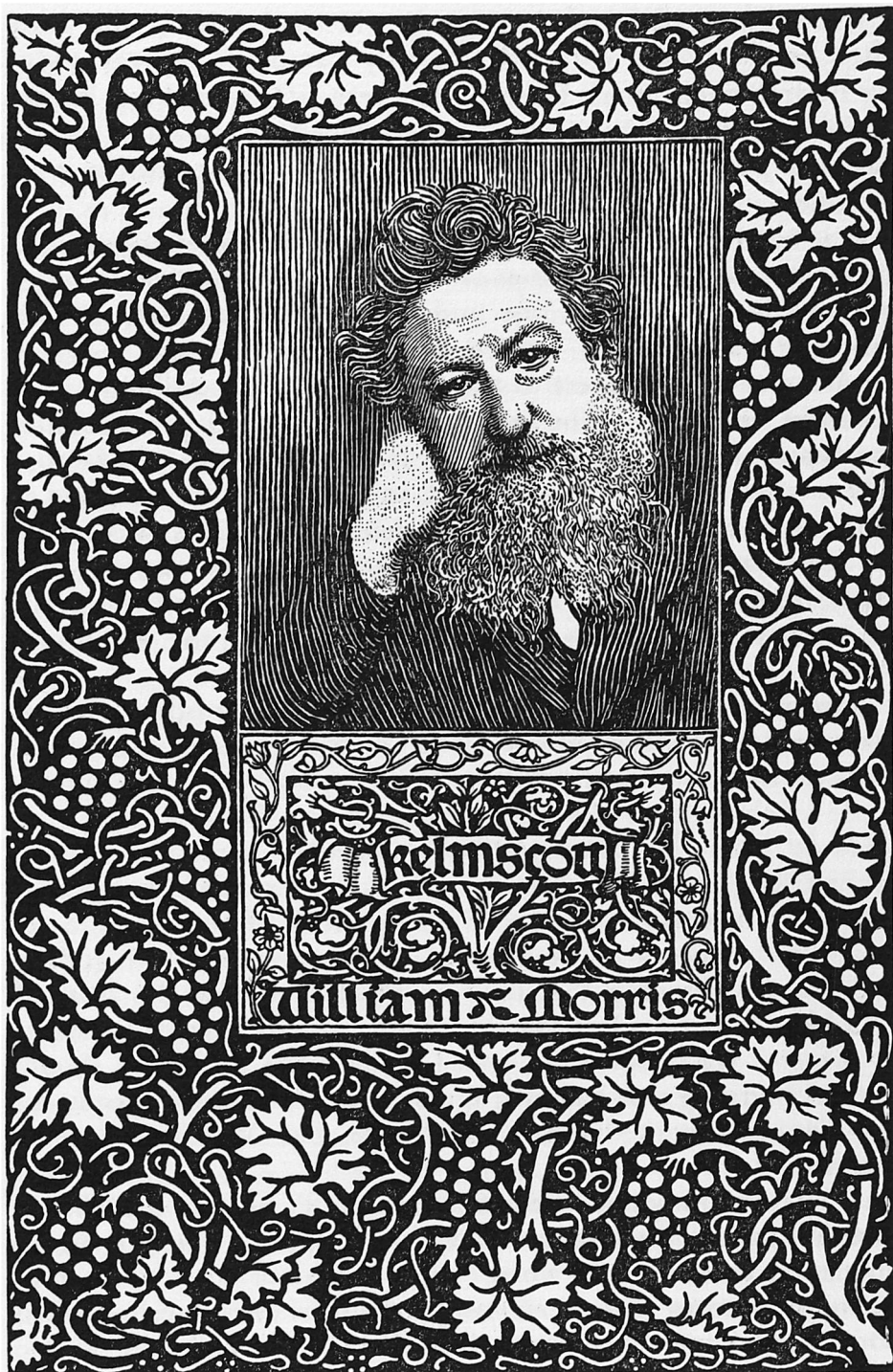


IN the death of William Morris the world loses a man of many gifts, any one of which raises him above his kind.

As artist, poet, designer and craftsman, he has been of importance and has inspired others with something of his own powers.

As a poet he showed his particular bent early in life, writing mediaeval romances for a college magazine, another of whose contributors was Dante Gabriel Rossetti; and his name is associated in many minds with the luscious sweetness of his "Earthly Paradise," which was the flower and quintessence of his earlier verse. Later in life he discarded Italian legend for the sagas of the north, and though he again returned to Latin verse, giving the world a translation of the *Odyssey*, which many consider the very finest rendering of that great poem, he did not make a return in style to his earlier work.

Portrait of
William Morris.



William Morris

Though a poet, he was curiously practical, and at the time when he was busied with his "Earthly Paradise" he was studying how to bring more beauty into every life by making house-furnishing artistic through wall-papers, tapestries, curtains, stained glass and many other things that should combine beauty with usefulness.

It is not too much to say that his influence metamorphosed the former tasteless accessories of daily life into what was infinitely more harmonious in line and hue. The notoriety of his famous "peacock room" called the attention of both designers and buyers of wall-papers to the fact that it was possible to have beautiful hangings. The same sense of mingled practicability and beauty led him to select as his factory the ruins of a famous abbey (that of Merton in Surrey), in which he so managed to hide his work shops that the grandeur of the ruins was not in the least impaired. Here he has for many years carried on a really large business and made a fortune, which indeed was needed to make possible his greatest work—that of the Kelmscott Press.

Morris as poet and artist must rank with many others, but as book-maker he stands nearly alone (in the era), and it is on his work in this line that he will be chiefly spoken of in the future.

At Kelmscott Press the perfection of book-making has gone on under his constant supervision and practical assistance. It had long been his ambition to produce as perfect work as when a book was the sole and life-long work of one man; to restore all the beauty of illuminated lettering, richness of gilding and grace of binding that used to make a volume the treasure of a king, and the ideal toward which his efforts were constantly directed was to give the world at least one book that should exceed anything that had ever appeared. His admirers see in his most finished work that rare excellence, but Morris was never satisfied.

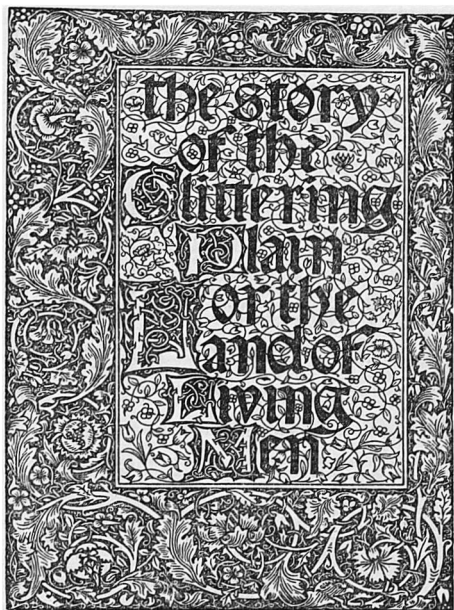
Above anything else he exalted handicraft; he not only labored himself, but all the minutae of bookmaking, as it issued from his shop, was literally hand-work. The machine, with all its mechanical deftness, was an abomination in his eyes, and he looked for a golden age when even the cheapest work should be the effort of individual effort. To this end he set up his now

famous

William Morris

famous Press. To use his own words, "My wish was to show that a book could be printed in beautiful type, on beautiful paper, and bound in beautiful binding as easily as we now do the opposite of this."

Morris designed his type after the best examples of early



printers, what he called his "golden type" being copied after Jenson, Parautz, Coburger and others; they also had copied, so he judged, from manuscripts, choosing the most perfect letters, and gradually making their type from those noble examples. Having his type to his mind, Morris expended an equal care on the choice of his paper, which he adapted to his subject with the same idea of its fitness that governed his selection of material for binding.

His editions of Froissart, Chaucer, Piers, Plowman, and

"The Life and Death of Jason" are perhaps the noblest examples of his art. In the Froissart he acknowledged a particular pride, saying to one who was so happy as to be admitted to his workshop: "No book that I could do would give me half the pleasure I am getting from the Froissart. I am simply revelling in it. It's such a noble and glorious work, and every page as it leaves the press delights me more than I can say."

The Chaucer, which by many is held to far surpass the Froissart, is a monument of skill and beauty. To mention only one of its charms, it is enriched by upwards of a hundred illustrations by Burne-Jones.

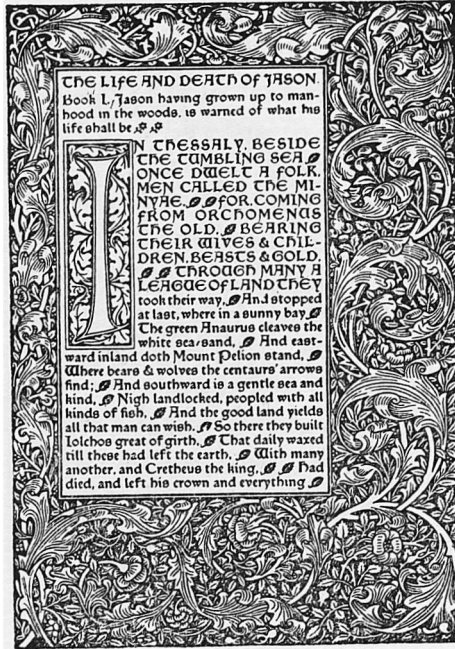
This wealth of expenditure, while it enriched the intrinsic beauty of Morris' work, necessarily made its price one beyond the reach of any but the wealthy, and nearly as often as the name of Morris is mentioned, it is accompanied by computations of the enormous sums he has made by these rare editions, the truth being that, owing to the lavishness with which they are

George Du Maurier

conceived, the profits have often been swallowed up by the cost.

In a very interesting letter written by him in 1884 to Emma Lazarus, he says in conclusion: "You see I have got to understand thoroughly the manner of work under which the art of the middle ages was done, and that that was the *only manner* of work which can turn out popular art, only to discover that it is impossible to work in that manner in this profit-grinding society. So I am driven towards revolution as the only hope, and am growing clearer and clearer on the speedy advent of it in a very obvious form."

The personality of Morris was a captivating one, and all his surroundings were artistic. From his home, Kelmscott House, a sketch of which was given in the June number of this magazine, to his workshop and factory, all showed his sense of fitness and beauty.



GEORGE DU MAURIER, ARTIST AND AUTHOR.



ATING from the appearance of "Peter Ibbetson" and the consequent conviction that a new and fascinating romancer had been vouchsafed to us in this comparatively arid end of the century, there has been, as the apparent result of regarding Du Maurier as an author, a certain species of apathy felt for Du Maurier the artist, and if he had lived, the possibility of his accepting the evident preference for the author's work, rather than that of the artist, is a matter for curious speculation. However, this could hardly have been, for Du Maurier's romances without Du Maurier's illustrations would have been sadly incomplete. How have we divined the distinct personalities of Trilby, Taffy, the Laird, or Little Billee, without Du